Climate Change, Pete Schwartz

Assignment: Before we meet next Wednesday, March 19, I ask that you watch some videos and read some articles, and then document your thoughts. Please come to class ready to discuss this process. Of course you don’t have to, but I think it will bring you more if you do.

Video 2a:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJGrXgd-jxk>

Reading assignment from the LATimes:

<http://articles.latimes.com/2011/may/16/world/la-fg-china-happiness-20110516>

Washington Post Article about a Helicopter Date:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/helicopter-stunt-creates-buzz-at-patriot-high-school/2012/09/17/ff04b162-00d1-11e2-9367-4e1bafb958db_story.html>

The New Yorker: Jevon’s Paradox (see attachment)

Writing Assignment:

We are beneficiaries in the present system we call society. That is, we benefit from the same system that does things we may recognize as “bad”. The fact that we are beneficiaries makes this recognition extra difficult because it may imply that we should change.

I find great similarities between death and change. In particular, how we greet change and death. We could view change as a death of what was, and the birth of something different. Neither death, nor birth is comfortable, and thus change is hard. There has been considerable attention to the grieving processes of death and loss (like the break up of a partnership), and I wish to observe these processes in society and in our lives when confronted with the opportunity/necessity to change. Please see: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%BCbler-Ross_model> and consider the 5 stages of grief:

1. Denial,
2. Anger and blaming
3. Bargaining
4. Depression
5. Acceptance – and deciding how to move on, how we want to be.

Likely we wish to pass through these and gain acceptance as soon as possible. However, this process is often necessary and I think it deserves attention. It would also be very helpful to recognize where we are in the process to comfort ourselves and provide a reality check. Let’s do this.

1. Please document these five steps in your acceptance of a death or tragedy in your life.
2. Please document how you may be a beneficiary of a system that has consequences you recognize as bad.
3. Please make observations of the five steps in society as we come face to face with the reality that we can’t keep growing as we have been – be it global deforestation, climate change, depletion of ground water (for instance in Paso Robles), global pollution such as mercury in the Pacific Ocean.
4. Please make observations of your own struggle to accept a change in your own life. This can be something new you tried, or coming to terms with #2 above. In the end, I may ask you, “how do you want to be with this, and how will you go about being what you want to be?”

Please bring this statement to class to discuss and share with others for the next class.